IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as shown below.

1.   (Currently Amended) An image search apparatus which searches for an image, the apparatus comprising:

image storage means for storing a plurality of images;

region information storage means for storing partial images included in the respective images stored in said image storage means in correspondence with the respective images;

region feature storage means for storing features of the partial images stored in said region information storage means in correspondence with the respective partial images;

receiving means for receiving a feature ~~of a target image~~ as a search ~~condition to search for the target image~~ query;

search means for searching for an image including the partial image which contains [[the]] a feature ~~received by said receiving means as a candidate image~~ corresponding to the search query; and

search result display means for displaying ~~the candidate~~ a searched image, enlarging the partial image corresponding to the search ~~condition~~ query in the searched image, and ~~superimposing~~ composing the enlarged partial image~~, of the candidate image,~~ onto the displayed ~~candidate~~ searched image.

2.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein when a plurality of ~~candidate~~ <u>searched</u> images are obtained on the basis of a search result, said search result display means displays reduced images of the plurality of ~~candidate~~ <u>searched</u> images in the form of a list.

3. to 4.   (Cancelled)

5.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said search result display means ~~superimpose~~ <u>composes</u> a plurality of partial images while ~~keeping~~ <u>maintaining</u> a relative positional relationship between the plurality of partial images, if said search means searches the ~~candidate~~ <u>searched</u> image having the plurality of partial images which contain the feature.

6.   (Cancelled)

7.   (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein sizes of the plurality of partial images are unified to a predetermined size.

8. to 12.   (Cancelled)

13.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the apparatus further comprises switching means for switching display of a plurality of ~~candidate~~ <u>searched</u> images in said search result display means, and

said search result display means alternately displays the plurality of

~~candidate~~ <u>searched</u> images at the same position one by one on the basis of a switching

instruction from said switching means.

14.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein said search result display means displays the ~~candidate~~ <u>searched</u> image in an area

with a predetermined size.

15.   (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein said search result display means displays a circumscribed rectangular image

surrounding each partial image searched out by said search means.

16.   (Cancelled)

17.   (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein the region feature storage means stores, as a feature of the image, at least one of

concept information expressing a concept obtained from the partial image, text information

expressing the concept of the partial image, and an image feature expressing a feature of

the partial image.

18.   (Currently Amended) An image search method for an image search

apparatus which can be connected to

an image storage unit which stores a plurality of images,

a region information storage unit which stores partial images included in the respective images stored in said image storage unit in correspondence with the respective images, and

a region feature storage unit which stores features of the partial images stored in said region information storage unit in correspondence with the respective partial images, said method comprising:

a receiving step of receiving a feature ~~of a target image~~ as a search ~~condition to search for the target image~~ query;

a search step of searching for an image including the partial image which contains [[the]] a feature ~~received by said receiving step as a candidate image~~ corresponding to the search query; and

a search result display step of displaying ~~the candidate~~ a searched image, enlarging the partial image corresponding to the search ~~condition~~ query in the searched image, and ~~superimposing~~ composing the enlarged partial image~~, of the candidate image,~~ onto the displayed ~~candidate~~ searched image.

19. to 21.   (Cancelled)

22.   (Currently Amended) A computer readable recording medium storing a program for causing a computer, which can be connected to

an image storage unit which stores a plurality of images,

a region information storage unit which stores partial images

included in the respective images stored in said image storage unit in correspondence with the respective images, and

a region feature storage unit which stores features of the partial images in said region information storage unit in correspondence with the respective partial images, the program causing the computer to execute:

a receiving step of receiving a feature ~~of a target image~~ as a search ~~condition to search for the target image~~ query;

a search step of searching for an image including the partial image which contains [[the]] a feature ~~received by said receiving step as a candidate image~~ corresponding to the search query; and

a search result display step of displaying ~~the candidate~~ a searched image, enlarging the partial image corresponding to the search ~~condition~~ query in the searched image, and ~~superimposing~~ composing the enlarged partial image~~, of the candidate image,~~ onto the displayed ~~candidate~~ searched image.